

**FREE**

# Swan Supping



Campaign for Real Ale  
Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe Branch  
[www.swansupping.org.uk](http://www.swansupping.org.uk)

Issue 55

AUG/SEP 2006



## TOO HIGH A PRICE TO PAY!



Have a quick look at the local news section in this issue and you will find details of landlords leaving their pubs and temporary managers taking charge.

So what, you might say, hasn't that always been the case? Certainly not in the large number of landlord changes we are seeing at the moment!

We used to see landlord changes due to retirement after many years of good service, now we are seeing an ever increasing number leaving the trade because they cannot make a living, certainly not one that justifies working 24/7 all year long. It is possibly in the nature of landlords to bemoan their fate, however more and more these days are saying the same things!

The pubcos own an ever increasing number of our drinking establishments and upward-only rent increases still seem to be the norm! This is very popular with their shareholders who reap the benefit from ever increasing profits. However, in the long term, the only way pubs can survive is with 'reasonable and sustainable rents' and the freedom to take advantage of local tastes and opportunities when they occur.

The beer that they offer to their tenants is at a 'substantial discount', but this is still around 30% more than the price at any of the local beer wholesalers! Landlords cannot even take advantage of special offers that come their way without being in breach of contract. *CAMRA* is

campaigning for the Guest Beer Right in all pubs, not just Free Houses.

The pubcos will counter this argument by saying that it is possible to have a contract which allows the landlord to buy their beer where they please. The increase in the price of the lease is structured in such a way to remove virtually all potential benefit from this.

To survive, pubs concentrate more on food but this advantage gets clawed back in the next rent review.

The inevitable price we may have to pay in the future is yet another drastic reduction in the number of pubs as more and more landlords get forced out of the trade.

*David Roe*

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A newsletter with a print run of 5000 for the discerning drinkers of Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe

Local News



**ASKETT**

The **Three Horseshoes** has been reported as being dark and closed on some occasions recently. This is the only pub remaining in Askett after the Black Horse became the Raj Mahal and, recently, Coco Tamarind (Indian Restaurants).

**ASTON CLINTON**

The **Crows' Nest** has recently had a refurbishment to state-of-the-art **Beefeater** standard.

The **Oak** will be holding its annual beer festival over the weekend of the 15th – 17th of September. There will also be a pig roast on the Sunday.

**AYLESBURY**

The **Hop Pole** now has a large function room available. This has been built in the area which was formerly used for music evenings and has a separate bar and would be ideal for wedding receptions, meetings etc. The five rooms available for bed and full English breakfast are also available so if you don't fancy driving home after sampling from the ten handpumps on the main bar, you might try and stay the night.

Oscar Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' and Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew' were performed by the Oxford Shakespeare Company in the courtyard of the **King's Head** in July. Both were very well received despite the heat and it is hoped that the courtyard will be used for many more live functions in the future including live bands and a proposed beer festival.

The new person in charge at the **Old Plough & Harrow** since the 14th of June is Lisa Cooper who used to run the **Duke of York** in Hanwell. This **Enterprise Inns** owned pub is currently serving no real ale, but it is hoped that this will change in the near future.

Les Shardlow will leave the **Queens Head** sometime in August after having been landlord there for over seven years. He will be concentrating on his **Tipsy Mouse Company** which specialises in running outside bars for beer festivals, weddings etc. as well as being available for relief management. In his time at the **Queens Head**, Les has also run the **Kings Head** and the **Shoulder of Mutton**, Little Horwood.

We are still getting conflicting reports regarding the **Ship** which we featured as being in danger of sinking without trace under the proposed Waterside development. The petition to save the **Ship** is still running on our website and you can add your name to the cause by going to <http://www.swansupping.org.uk/petitions/ship/>.

The garden at the **Steeplechase** looked very nice on a recent visit when a pint of **Shepherd Neame Spitfire** (rare in Aylesbury) was enjoyed. We will be having a joint social with **Mid Chilterns Branch** there to play cribbage and snooker (the **Steeplechase** has a full sized table that we featured in issue 50). Now all we have to do is find some local **CAMRA** members who can actually play like Jimmy White!

**BIERTON**

On the 16th of June Linda Wright and Martin Foord, formerly from Swindon, took over at the **Red Lion**. This **Punch Taverns** pub is now serving **Charles Wells Bombardier**, **Fullers London Pride** and **Greene King IPA**. There is also the possibility of **Badger Tanglefoot** in the near future.

**BRILL**

There will be a beer festival at the **Brill Sports and Social Club** over the August Bank Holiday (26th – 28th). This will be the third Brill Village annual beer festival and will feature lots of other events including live music, a pig roast and a classic car rally.

**CROWELL**

The **Shepherd's Crook** will be holding their annual beer festival over the Bank Holiday weekend of 25th - 28th August.

**CUBLINGTON**

The **Unicorn** will also be holding a beer festival over the August Bank Holiday weekend of 25th - 28th. So much beer, so little time!

**FLACKWELL HEATH**

Edward & Jean Atkins of the **Stag** have sold via chartered surveyors **Fleurets** to new lessee Emma Browne of an asking price of £115,000. Jean had been at the pub for 10+ years before officially taking the lease in 2001. They have retired from the trade and will be travelling around Europe in

*(Continued on page 23)*

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## LOCAL BEER FESTIVAL SUCCESS



As the temperatures increased, so did the thirsts and we were well entertained through the afternoon by the Ian English Jazz Group, and then the Haddenham Hoofers. As kick-off time approached, the TV Marquee was filled with loyal English fans for the World Cup quarter-final, while others enjoyed the sunshine outside, and the beers inside.

Beer of the Festival was won by *Norfolk Lavender* from *Wolf* brewery in Norfolk, closely followed by *Blonde* from *Butcombe* and *Mystery Tor* from *Glastonbury Ales*, both in Somerset. Mention must also be made of the excellent beer produced specially for the Festival, by Haddenham's own *Vale Brewery*, and named *Pegasus Ale*.

The disappointing football result did not dampen the spirit of the proceedings. Local butcher Simon Parminter conducted a splendid barbecue using his home produced burgers and sausages. Towersey Morrismen gave a rousing performance, and the beer continued to flow. In fact, we do have to admit that we eventually managed to run out of real ale yet again, and for the last hour or so before we closed at about 10.30 p.m. we were serving bottled beers, but no one went thirsty!!

The third annual Haddenham Real Ale Festival was held at the Youth and Community Centre on Saturday 1st July. Having run out of beer at the previous two festivals, we increased from 24 barrels to 40 barrels, representing 36 different real ales, plus 4 ciders. Surely we couldn't run out this time!

Having tapped the barrels on the Thursday we did a lot of ice-making to ensure the beers were presented in good condition. Saturday dawned bright and clear and the real ale enthusiasts streamed in at opening time and got stuck in to the tasting. Val Young and her helpers provided a range of hot and cold bar snacks, which again proved very popular.

The committee thanks all the sponsors, the entertainers and the helpers who contributed to the success of the day. Around 1,000 people attended, and we raised £7,200 for the Upward Bound Trust, which will help to keep the gliders at Haddenham airfield.

We look forward to seeing you all again on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June next year, with even more beer on offer!

*Doug Harrison*

# The Shepherd's Crook

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## BEER FESTIVAL

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# PUB WALK: BUTLER'S CROSS TO LACEY GREEN

This walk goes through some of the most stunning countryside in the Chilterns. It has outstanding views, valuable opportunities to observe rare flora and fauna and, of course, some great real ale pubs.

The walk starts at Butler's Cross and ends at Lacey Green and is likely to take about 6 hours at a reasonably relaxed pace with time to enjoy some ale along the way. It is about seven and a half miles. More miles are likely to be clocked up on this walk than pints sunk. This is partly because the limited opening hours of two pubs on or near the route make it almost impossible to include both in the same walk – a missed opportunity for these establishments.

The start and finish are at bus stops on the 323 bus route. This runs between Aylesbury and Wycombe and is one of the most regular and reliable public transport links in the area. Unusually, it actually runs at times when people might want to use it. The buses have a tendency to arrive slightly early, especially at off peak times, so bear this in mind when enjoying your last (planned) pint.

The walk could be done in either direction but north to south is recommended as the widest real ale selection is on offer at the last pub. If going the opposite way, simply reverse the directions, although this may not be so easy after three or four pints.

The going is moderately easy although there are some steep climbs. Some of the route follows well signposted trails, such as the Ridgeway, Icknield Way and South Bucks Way.

The Chiltern Society has also provided some very clear waymarking in the Great Hampden area. All the paths were free from any obstructions at the time of researching. Some cross arable fields which are liable to be ploughed at certain times of the year, although farmers are obliged to re-instate the routes.

We have a sketched illustration to show the route. However, this is not a map and is not to scale. It is strongly recommended that a good Ordnance Survey map is also used – in this case Explorer 181 (1:25, 000 scale) Chiltern Hills North.

This summer the whole route was bone dry. However, when the rain arrives ensure appropriate footwear is worn and remember that some of the pubs on the route have a zero tolerance policy towards walking boots inside the premises.

And so to the beer drinking. Alight from the 323 at the **Russell** in Butler's Cross. The pub used to be called the **Russell Arms** but the limbs were severed a couple of years ago in a refurbishment.

The yellow Veuve Cliquot umbrellas over the

roadside tables give an idea of the pub's target clientele. The interior has an upmarket feel with plenty of polished wood. The **Russell** has a good reputation locally for its food – but the interior is definitely more pub than restaurant. Don't miss the secluded garden, which is tucked away to the side of the pub. In the winter a warming fire burns in the main bar.

Start the walk by choosing from one of **Russell's** three real ales – *Adnams Bitter*, *Greene King IPA* or *Fuller's London Pride*. We had a nice pint of *Adnams*.

It is about two and a half miles to the next pub. Turn left towards Wendover from the **Russell** and walk up the hill. A pavement extends for the first part of the road but there is a short stretch of about 200 yards with no path. Take

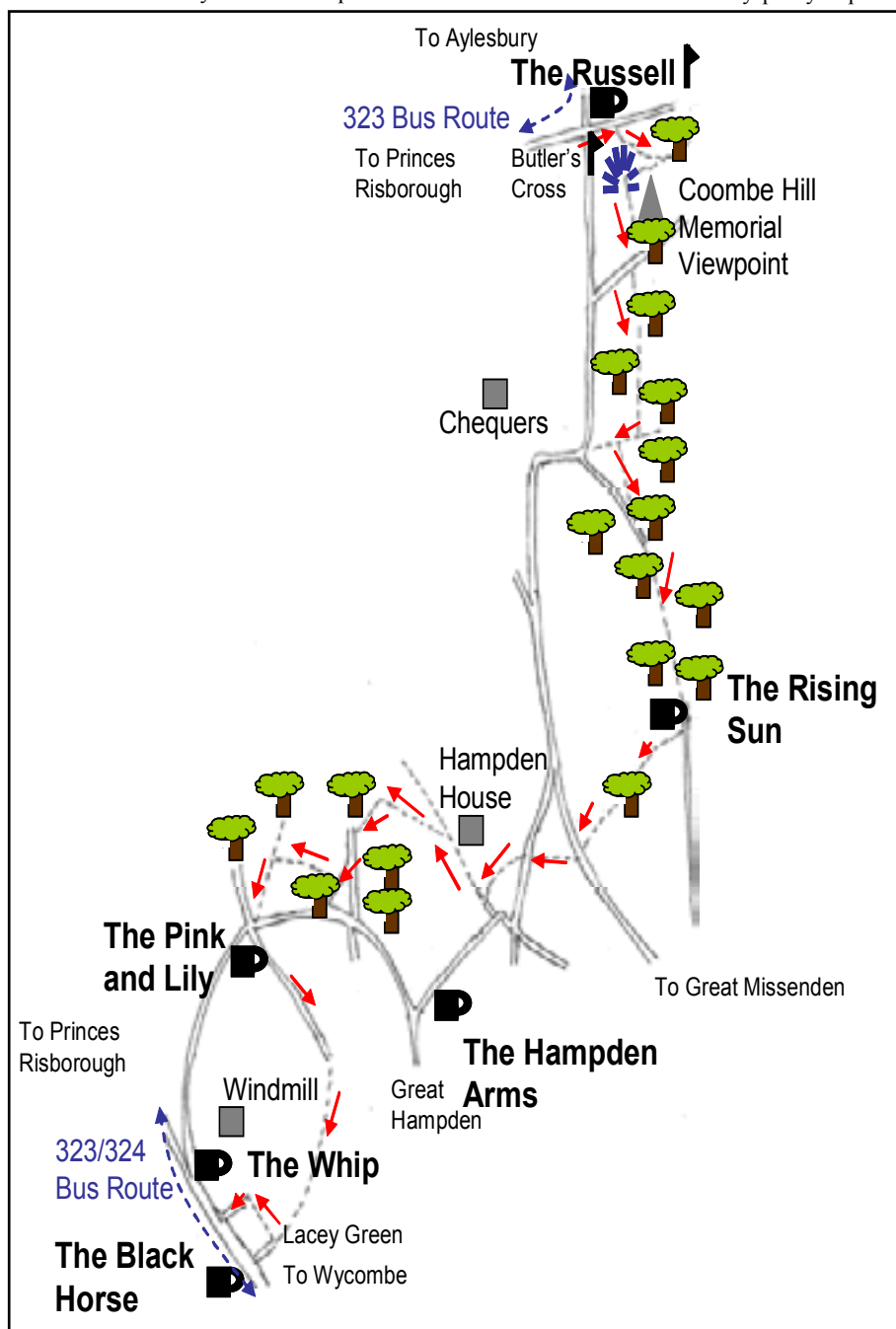
care here.

Two bridleways are signposted on the right by a gate into the golf course. Take the leftmost one.

Climb up a fairly steep gradient for about a quarter of a mile until the path is crossed by the Ridgeway. Turn right on to the Ridgeway and follow it to the Boer War monument on the top of Coombe Hill.

This is the highest viewpoint in the Chilterns and there are magnificent views. Didcot power station is visible in the south-west and the whole of Aylesbury Vale can be surveyed.

A vertiginous footpath runs down from the monument to Butler's Cross. Our concern for reader's health and safety partly explains



## ALONG THE RIDGEWAY

the recommended direction of this walk. We wouldn't want to face lawsuits from those who happen to stumble down this path after having had a few pints.

Continue following the Ridgeway into the extensive woodland for approximately another three quarters of a mile – doing a slight dogleg when crossing the minor road.

In due course the Ridgeway is signposted to the right down a track. Go this way for about 100 yards and then turn left up a well-defined track, signposted South Bucks Way and Icknield Way.

This leads directly to the next pub – the **Rising Sun**. If in doubt keep heading in the same general direction and stay within the woods.

The **Rising Sun** at Little Hampden is in a beautifully secluded spot at the end of a country lane with a pleasant front garden. It appears to be an immaculately kept pub (remove those boots) that has a substantial trade in food and accommodation.

Being in a somewhat remote spot, the **Rising Sun** keeps slightly parsimonious hours. Rather like a restaurant it is closed to the public on Sunday evening and all of Monday and shuts at 10pm every other night. It also shuts after lunch at 3pm every day – a major consideration when planning this walk.

Prices take after the hilly gradients in the area. On our recent visit the real ale of the month (*Shepherd Neame Spitfire*) was at the psychological £3 a pint price point. The house real ale – *Adnams Bitter* – comes in at a more reasonable £2.60 a pint. Coke is £1.85 for a 330ml bottle.

Nevertheless, the **Rising Sun** is an agreeable location to pass an hour or two and it should be credited with making a noticeable effort to make a successful business out of a country pub – with real ale a key ingredient.

It is now about three miles until the next drink. Turn right and head down the lane for about 100 yards. Take the first footpath signposted on the right down a short stretch of driveway.

Bear right on to the slightly overgrown footpath. This leads into a large barley field. As you cross, take time to imagine how much beer this would produce. The path across the field is well defined and exits into a small wood.

The route is waymarked through the wood. Head downhill and emerge on the right edge of another field (wheat this time) with the road to Chequers at the bottom.

Cross the road and head up the path signposted almost opposite – this time with the hedge to your left. Cross the minor road and head slightly left into some steepish pastureland. You will emerge at the main entrance to Hampden House. Walkers are invited to press a button to open the electrically operated gate.

Continue up the driveway towards the historic house – which is associated with the Ship Tax revolt and other significant events around the Civil War period. The house might look eerily familiar to many as it was used as a location for many Hammer horror films.

The route goes close to the **Hampden Arms** in Great Hampden, which would make a welcome

refreshment stop. Unfortunately, you are likely to reach this point in mid-afternoon when the pub is likely to be shut. It occasionally opens all day at weekends, especially if there is a cricket match on the nearby green. The best advice is to phone ahead if you plan to make a detour.

The **Hampden Arms** has a very pleasant garden and serves two real ales – *Adnams Bitter* and *Vale's Hadda's Summer Ale* were spotted recently as well as real cider on handpump.

Continue along the driveway with Hampden House on your right. Go through the gate

(Continued on page 6)



>>>> A weekend to book in the diary! <<<<

# AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY BEER FESTIVAL

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## ON TO LACEY GREEN

(Continued from page 5)

and continue along a grassy track. This ends after about 200 yards at which point the route heads slightly to the left across a field – which was planted with oilseed rape in July). The path is quite distinct except where it nears a copse toward the far side of the field. Continue straight into the copse, where the path becomes more established again.

Head towards the edge of the field and walk parallel to the woodland for a couple of hundred yards where a stile can be spotted. Cross the stile and follow the path through the woodland – it is waymarked periodically. The path emerges at Redland End, near a junction on the road to Whiteleaf.

Cross the road and follow the minor road opposite for about 200 yards past the cottages. A stile can be found on the right, leading into more woodland. Continue on this path for about a third of a mile, crossing several forestry tracks, until the path passes through a fence with a distinct track on the other side. Turn left here and walk another 200 yards into a small hamlet. Follow the driveways on to Pink Road, turn right and the **Pink and Lily** is straight ahead.

The **Pink and Lily** thankfully operates flexible opening hours (it may be worth phoning to

check nearer the day) as by this point a drink is definitely required. It is a large pub with an extensive conservatory-style seating area, leading to a pleasant garden. There are a couple of adjoining rooms, including the famous Brooke Bar – a snug which was a favourite of the World War I poet Rupert Brooke and has been preserved in keeping with that period.

The pub has a thriving food trade but does not neglect the ale drinkers. It serves **Brakspears Bitter** and **London Pride** and also has a guest beer. Recent guests have been locally-brewed **Rebellion Stewed** and **Westerham Grasshopper**. They both went down the hatch very nicely.

The walk can be cut short slightly by heading directly down Pink Road for a mile or so to the **Whip**. However, the scenic route heads down Lily Bottom Lane, adjacent to the pub. The lane conjures up images of inter-war country capers and it is rumoured that this location was used in the Enid Blyton spoof 'Five Go Mad in Dorset'.

On reaching Lily Bottom Farm, turn right down the signposted bridleway. Continue along this track for approximately a mile. This route may get muddy in bad weather. The path follows the line of Grim's Ditch – a series of iron age earthworks whose exact purpose is

still obscure.

You will descend into a small valley and then rise up an incline towards Lacey Green. Just before the first house is reached there is a crossroads where a distinct grassy lane crosses Grim's Ditch at right angles. The route takes a right turn here in order to avoid the main road as much as possible.

However, the **Black Horse** at the southern end of Lacey Green is worth a detour if you don't mind completing the walk on the main road. This is a cosy one-bar pub with plenty of real ale on offer.

The scenic route follows the grass path for another third of a mile until it reaches Goodacres Lane. Follow this to the main road and turn right towards the **Whip**.

After a gruelling slog, the **Whip** offers a real treat for ale lovers. Recently there have been five real ales always on offer. The three standard real ales are **Greene King IPA**, **London Pride** and **Bass**. However, the remaining two beers are generally from microbreweries, such as **Stonehenge** and **RCH** to take a couple of recent examples.

When your valiant researchers reached the Whip, having endured temperatures in the

(Continued on page 7)

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**THE END**

(Continued from page 6)

nineties, we were served the most superb pint of **Butcombe Blonde**. This beer was ideally suited for the conditions and it hardly touched the sides of the glass.

The **Whip** has an admirable tradition of hosting two beer festivals a year and, this year, was planning to hold a week long beer festival at the end of July to celebrate the landlord's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday by serving up as many different real ales.

In addition to this real ale cornucopia, the pub is thoroughly family friendly – children love the fish tank – and has a pleasant garden overlooking the Lacey Green windmill.

When you've had your fill of good beer there are bus stops in both directions for the 323 and 324 immediately outside the **Whip** to get you home.

(Information on pub opening hours was correct to the best of our knowledge at the end of July but may be subject to change. All distances are rough estimates.)

Mike Clarke

**SALISBURY TRIP**

The Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe Branch of **CAMRA** are organising a trip to Salisbury on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September.

Fourteen lucky people will also be able to take a free tour of the **Hop Back Brewery** in Downton, Wiltshire.

Salisbury has many excellent and historic real ale pubs, many of which have been already checked out. Around a dozen pubs were recommended in the February edition of **What's Brewing** so there's plenty to keep people occupied all day for those who do not make the brewery visit.

Salisbury also offers many non beer-related attractions. It is a very a historic city with a magnificent 13<sup>th</sup> Century cathedral, which has Britain's tallest spire.

It is also quite a significant shopping centre – with lots of the sort of specialist craft shops that are found in touristy cities. This may give an opportunity to try and get friends or 'other halves' along for the trip too.

**Hop Back** will need no introduction to real ale lovers. It was featured extensively in July's **What's Brewing** as a pathfinding brewer, with its phenomenally successful Summer Lightning credited with creating the new style of Golden Ale.



The exact cost depends on the eventual numbers but is likely to be £20-25. We will start to pick up at around 9am in a coach or minibus on a route from Aylesbury to Marlow via Princes Risborough and High Wycombe. We will aim to return to Aylesbury about 11pm.

If you would like to join the trip the please e-mail Mike Clarke (mike.clarke@swansupping.org.uk) as soon as possible.

Further details of Branch Activities can be found on page 22 and on our website: www.swansupping.org.uk.



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## FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS!

The Whitsun Bank holiday weekend was a magnet for various local beer festivals, mainly on our branch borders, but the second annual beer fest at the **Bell**, Princes Risborough got my attention on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May.

Having been absent at last year's event, it was time to brave the showers to imbibe a

good selection of fourteen real ales. With Messrs. Clarke, Roe and Williamson in close attendance to keep order, we sampled the gravity dispensed delights on offer.

Starting with *Red Rose Treacle Miners' Tipple* (3.9), a dark mild, I moved onto *Billy Boy* (4.4) from *Poachers* and *Turnpike* (3.6) from the

excellent *Tunnel* brewery in Warwickshire. A helpful beer fest tasting notes brochure of the fourteen ales and three ciders on offer, proved invaluable in the 'pleasing dilemma for opting on one's next brew'.

Because of the inclemency of the weather forecast, a talisman marquee had been erected in the pub's beer garden to keep everyone dry and happy.

Nourishment was supplied by a pig roast. The pork, apple sauce and crackling baps proving both welcome and wholesome while supping *Dow Bridge Churchhills Best* (4.2), *Marston's Merry Monk* (4.5) and *Golden Hop* (4.3) from Leicestershire's *Shardlow Brewing Company*.

Licensees Andy Saunders and Maggie Kennedy have again staged a very worthwhile real ale experience at their **Bell** public house, and many plaudits go out to all their efforts.

As I sign off, *Dr's Orders* (4.4), from *Hydes* and a brace from the *Westerham* brewery in the form of *Finchcocks Original Kentish Hop Ale* (3.5) and a solid *India Pale Ale (200<sup>th</sup> Brew)* (4.8), before I surrender to my sanctuary bolthole in Marlow.

*Daphne Parsal*



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**FOR SALE**



Swan Supping is offering you the chance of buying a stained glass window.

It belonged to Michelle (Midge) Beck, who died this year at a tragically early age, and has a prominent MB in the centre.

All proceeds for the sale will be split between two charities: Oxfam and the Friends of Florence Nightingale House.

The window is about 94 cm x 67 cm and can be picked up by arrangement.

Please contact the editor (details on page 22) for further information.



# Brill Beer Festival

Aug 26-28 2006

[brillbeerfestival.co.uk](http://brillbeerfestival.co.uk)

**SATURDAY NIGHT the 26th FEATURES LIVE MUSIC FROM THE BRILLIANT BAND 'LEATHERAT' WITH BAR & FOOD AVAILABLE**

From 7.30pm - Midnight, ticket price £8.00/person (including a free Festival pint glass) or £7.50 each if bought in advance. £5.00 for under 16's (no free glass)

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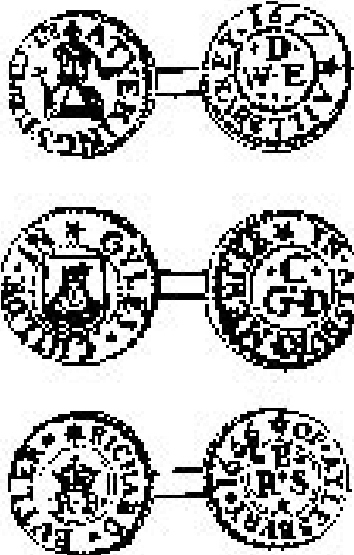
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## 17th CENTURY INNKEEPERS' TOKENS

The use of tokens due to shortages of small coinage for people's daily needs goes back as far as 1300 in the reign of Edward I. Little was done to improve matters in the three and half centuries that followed, to the great discontent of tradesmen and their customers. In 1613, James I granted a patent to a favoured noble to mint copper farthings which led to protests about royal profiteering; it is no wonder that during the turmoil of civil war, people took matters into their own hands. Not only did they do away with the head of state (literally) in 1649 but many tradesmen (such as drapers, grocers, bakers, brewers and innkeepers) began issuing tokens made of base metals stamped with their names and trades, dates and devices. It has been estimated that during the 17<sup>th</sup> century over 12,000 types of tokens were issued in Great Britain. These tokens were popular as an everyday means of exchange. They could be used for the purchase of goods from the issuing tradesman or for barter locally, or collected and redeemed for silver coin. Inevitably abuse crept in, forging and underweight tokens led to complaints and petitions, such that in 1672 the use of trade tokens was abolished to be replaced by a regal issue of copper farthings and halfpence. Further problems with the supply of these, however, led to the reappearance of trade tokens in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Readers of *Swan Supping* might find it interesting to look at a few of the 17<sup>th</sup> century tokens, usually with a redeemable value of a farthing, issued by innkeepers in Aylesbury and High Wycombe. In 1625, an innkeeper could buy a kilderkin (18 gallons) of 'fine ale' from the brewer for 3s4d and sell it for farthing a half-pint - a whopping 80% mark-up - and that was before the introduction of beer duty in 1643 - the rapsallions!



In 1657, the innkeeper of our 'Hostelry of The Year', the Tudor **Kings Head** in Aylesbury, one William Dawney, produced tokens on site bearing as a central motif a bust of Henry VIII, the inn sign; the token thus created a visual link with, and effectively an advertisement for, the pub. The inn dates back at least to the time of Henry VI, so perhaps the head of the King depicted in its sign was changed at some point. It would not have been much good for business, though, if Dawney had depicted poor Charlie's recently removed head on his tokens, particularly as Oliver Cromwell was a notable visitor to the inn; better to stick with an image of the popular Henry VIII who, judging by his eventual girth, probably enjoyed his ale. The inscription on the obverse reads **AT YE KINGS · HEAD · IN** with on the reverse **AILLSBVREY · 1657** around the initials **W·D·E** (William Dawney and his wife Elizabeth).

At about the same time, Gyles Child, thought to have been a draper, issued a token bearing the sign of the **Mercer's Arms** (its location in Aylesbury is unknown) inscribed **GYLES · CHILD · IN** and on the reverse **IN · ALSBVRY · MERCER**. Mercers (cloth merchants) were amongst those tradesmen who issued tokens, therefore it is unclear whether in fact this token related to an inn - but the



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MORE TOKENS



*The Crown Hotel (formerly the Crowne Inn), demolished in 1937, at the north-east corner of Market Square.*

double use of the word 'IN' suggests that this may have been so. Perhaps Gyles Child was one of a new breed of entrepreneurs blazing a trail for Tesco and the like, who saw the business opportunity in selling his customers a new doublet and hose with their ale.

A token of 1666 bearing the name of Richard Butler, with his initials under a crown has been attributed to the old Aylesbury coaching house, the **Crowne Inn**.

As an aside, it may be worth noting, that by 1870 when the population of Aylesbury was about 6000, there were 60 public houses and 27 'beerhouses' in the town - definitely scope for a challenging pub-crawl.

William Fisher was Mayor of Wycombe in 1651 - surely a fellow worthy of the office, as in 1652 we find him issuing a token for the **Clothworkers' Arms** with the inscription WILLIAM · FISHER on the obverse and IN · WIKCOMBE · 1652 on the reverse. Again, it is uncertain whether the 'Arms' depicted were simply of the Guild of Clothworkers, or whether William Fisher, like Gyles Child in Aylesbury, above, was an innkeeper trying to encourage his customers to be the best-dressed boozers in Bucks.

An imposing halfpenny token was issued in 1669 by John Jusson of the **Chequers Inn** which stood at the corner of White Hart Street and Church Street, High Wycombe. The token reads IOHN · IVSON · AT · THE (set around a 'checky-square') with on the reverse IN · HIGH · WICKHAM · 1669 around HIS HALF PENY and the initials I I M (for John Jusson and his wife Mary).

Richard Lucas Landlord of the **Red Lion** in Wycombe High Street was obviously a doughty landlord who did not mince his words. His splendid token of 1670 reads RICH · LVCAS · OF · WICKHAM around the initials R·L·D 1670 and RATHER · DEAD · THEN · DISLOYAL set round a lion rampant. Lucas was also Mayor of Wycombe in 1660, 1667 and 1672. Perhaps we should revive the practice of electing good Landlords as Mayors, who knows what favours they might bestow on their loyal customers...

The tokens referred to above are just a few of those issued in the area now covered by the *Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe branch of CAMRA*. No doubt innkeepers found that tokens were good for business - where better, after all, to spend your small change than in the hostelry from which you obtained it. Modern day, so-called 'loyalty points' work on a similar principle - now there's an idea for our favourite pubs.

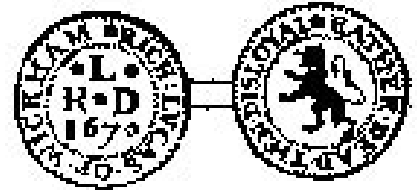
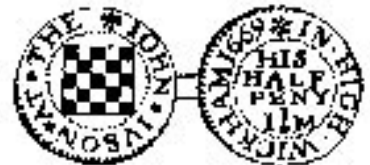
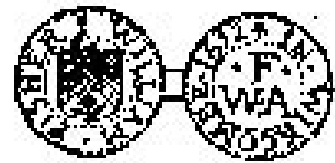
Sources:

Principally, and by courtesy of Buckinghamshire County Museum, the book *Buckinghamshire Trade Tokens issued in the Seventeenth Century* by J.O. Manton and E. Hollis, publ. Bucks. Archaeological Society, Aylesbury, 1933, from which all of the illustrations above were taken.

Also, *Trade Tokens* by Jim Newmark, publ. Shire Publications, Princes Risborough, 1981; *Beer and Breweries of Britain* by Roger Putnam, publ. Shire Publications,

2004; *Aylesbury, A Pictorial History* by Hugh Hanley & Julian Hunt, publ. Phillimore & Co. Ltd., Chichester in association with Buckinghamshire County Library, 1993.

I must record my special thanks, for their assistance in my research for this article, to Jamie Everitt and his colleagues at The Buckinghamshire County Museum Resource Centre at Halton. *Giles (Gyles) du Boulay*



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## BOOK REVIEW

The question of what makes ‘Britishness’ has recently exercised politicians like Gordon Brown, who likes to extemporise about shared ‘values’. As far as Englishness goes, the recently published ‘England in Particular’ is an ideal volume for anyone who wants to understand the national identity.

Its subtitle is ‘A Celebration of the Commonplace, the Local, the Vernacular and the Distinctive’: sociological theorising is shunned in favour of cataloguing the rich detail of ordinary life in this country – in which pubs and beer play a substantial part.

‘England in Particular’ is the result of over 20 years of research by the charity Common Ground, whose founders had long-standing associations with Friends of the Earth. However, this is no polemic. The book is structured in an A-Z format, which makes it a delight to dip into any of the 700 or so articles. At over 500 pages, encyclopaedic is a word that describes the size of the book as well as its contents.

The compilation of the book has clearly been a labour of love and an inspiration to those who ‘appreciate and stand up for what is significant about our surroundings’ at a time when it is being besieged by bland, homogenised global McCulture.

*Lovers of real ale will value such kindred spirits. The current rapid decline of traditional family brewers and the rise of craft microbreweries in their place is a particularly telling example of the battle between big business and diversity.*

The book wisely avoids the trap of evoking a twee vision of Merrie Olde England. Town is represented as well as the country with articles on the likes of bus shelters, bollards, factories and fish and chips.

A comprehensive index relates local places to the book’s articles.

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Sunday 13th August	<b>CLOSE CONTACT</b> with support from <b>8 - EYE</b>	20:30
Sunday 20th August	<b>CHARLIE DON'T SURF</b>	20:30
Wednesday 23rd August	<b>JAMES MANDERS</b> (Acoustic Guitarist)	13:00

Saturday 5th August	<b>THE POWDERS</b>	21:00
Saturday 12th August	<b>DREAM CAPTURE</b> with support from <b>ELLIE MYLES</b>	21:00
Saturday 19th August	<b>LIGHTBOX</b> with support from <b>MESSIAH</b>	21:00
Saturday 26th August	<b>CHARLIE DON'T SURF</b> with support from <b>LOZ JONES</b>	21:00

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	72 Pints (£50 deposit)	36 Pints (disposable)	18 Pints (disposable)	3.5 Pints (disposable)	5.25 Pints (disposable)	9 Pints (disposable)
IPA - 3.7%	£77.45	£42.95	£22.95	£5.00	£7.50	£14.00
SMUGGLER - 4.1%	£80.95	£45.45	£24.45	£5.25	£7.78	£14.50
SEASONAL - 4.2% - 4.5%	£84.95	£47.95	£25.95	£5.50	£8.25	£15.00
SEASONAL - 4.6% and above	£89.95	£50.95	£27.45	£6.00	£9.00	£16.00

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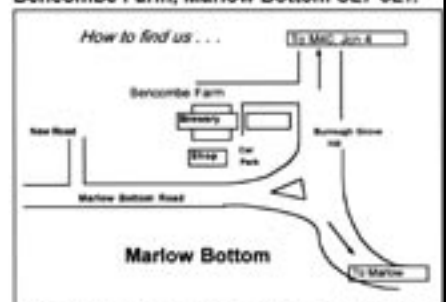
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## JOINT SOCIALS



We seem to be seeing a lot of the Mid Chilterns branch of the Campaign!

Not only did they give us tremendous support on our Black Country trip in July (as they always do!), they made us

very welcome at their third Boxmoor Beer festival. Their festival was a great success (pictured below), selling out early! Beer of the festival was *Tring Aldbury Alchemist*.

The Black Country trip this year included most of the pubs that have made this trip so popular over the years plus a visit to the Windsor Castle Brewery (pictured above - many thanks, Kevin!)

We hope to see as many of them as possible at our Snooker & Cribbage evening in September and at our beer festival in October.



## RINGING THE CHANGES



The **Bell** in Waddesdon reopened in June following a dramatic make-over. It is now part of the **Gourmet Pub Group** which has already transformed several pubs and the food is prepared by Head Chef Simon Seckington who has cooked for many dignitaries including HRH The Prince of Wales and Bill Clinton!

The result is a very pleasant village pub offering gourmet food but retaining a bar to be enjoyed by the local drinkers.

They intend to support local breweries, and at the opening guests with discerning palettes were treated to real ales from both *Chiltern (Chiltern Ale)* and *Rebellion (Brahms)*. To soak up the beer we were also treated to some lovely snacks (the mini bagels were exceptional!).

Local members might like to join us on the Waddesdon pub crawl on Wednesday 9th August and see for themselves.



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# MYSTERY OF THE HIDDEN ROOM



After taking over the **Swan** at Stewkley in October last year landlady Karen Foster immediately started on a programme of improvements. Whilst redecorating, a damp patch was found on a

what appears to be a hidden room of considerable size.

Measuring approximately 14ft by 12ft it has no ceiling, no plaster on most of the walls and no door, or any evidence of an earlier one. Three walls are timber framed and the fourth is of brick.



ground floor ceiling near the bar. To investigate this it was necessary to knock a hole through a wall to follow some pipework. This revealed

The presence of this room has obviously been known of in the past, as there is much evidence of pipework of various eras on the walls as well as insulation between the rafters of the floor, which is above the bar. Not so obvious is why it was sealed up in the first place, what it was before, or if it was ever used.

It is situated in the earliest part of the building, originally built as three cottages in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The pub was greatly extended in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, providing a more Georgian appearance of red brick construction. Further ground floor extension work has taken place since, as well as alterations in the bar area. All may have a bearing on the past of this room.

The 18<sup>th</sup> C extension would have deprived the room of its light, brickwork from this era now fronting it (see picture), and a new front room beyond it. A window could have been put in the side wall to compensate, but there is no sign of this. Perhaps the window tax of that period was a consideration, or maybe the new accommodation provided in the extension made the room less important. Maybe it was simply used for storage, but there is no apparent access.

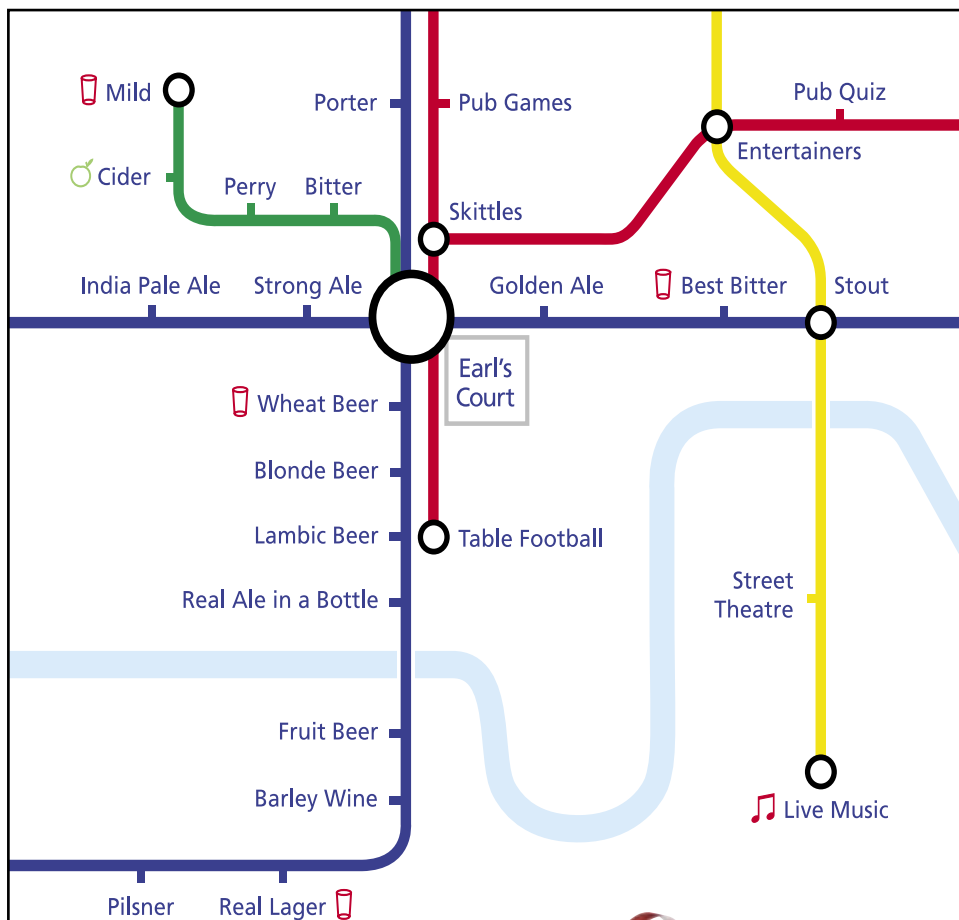
I am sure someone with local historical knowledge could enlighten us, meanwhile Karen tells of some peculiar happenings since the discovery.....

Rooms have been rearranged overnight, various items knocked over and Karen herself has been inexplicably locked in the cellar.

Apparently there are tales of a ghost called Valerie, who is constantly in search of a child she once lost. Perhaps she would know the answers.

If any one does know, please contact us.

Also please let us know of any mysteries in other pubs in the Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe area. *Mick White*



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## A SAD LOSS

The Bucks Herald's business editor Dave Truen died at the age of just 56 on Monday June 5.

Known to many CAMRA members and Aylesbury drinkers alike, Dave was an old fashioned journalist who was frequently seen around the town and its pubs with a ready smile and a handshake for all who knew him. Born in Penryn in 1950, Dave started working in newspapers at the tender age of just 14 when he got a job as a teaboy on a Cornish paper and worked in Cornwall for ten years. He arrived in Aylesbury in 1975 where he accepted a job as reporter with the Bucks Herald. Over the next thirty years, he held various roles reporting and editing and was appointed business editor in 1997.

All those at *Swan Supping* wish to send their condolences to his family on the sad loss of Dave, to whom there are many further tributes on the Bucks Herald website.

I knew Dave Truen for a long time as he was the reporter at a few CAMRA events and he will be always remembered for referring to myself as 'tall, slim Dave' in an article about the *Good Beer Guide* launch at the *Grapes* in 1982. It was a generous, if short-sighted comment at the time, but it is still trotted out twenty years later when it is even less appropriate! I'm sure that he would have been at the forefront of any battle to save the *Ship*. *David Roe*

I had met Dave on and off over some twenty years in both a business and social capacity. On one occasion, when manning our CAMRA stand at the *Dayla* show, I related to him the loss of a couple days out of my life as an inexperienced drinker, about forty years ago, when I recklessly consumed rather more scrumpy than was good for me at the *Hole in the Wall* in Bodmin (in the *Good Beer Guide*). As you can imagine, mention of that pub to a Cornishman like Dave Truen, brought both a smile and a wistful look to his face which I shall not forget - 'oh yes I know it well...' was his reply. *Giles du Boulay*

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## A TALE OF TWO PUBS



It is often said that the institution of the English pub is a broad church, encompassing a multitude of variations on a theme of lubricated hospitality.

This diversity can be seen on a short stretch of Risborough Road in Stoke Mandeville where the **Bull** and the **Woolpack** stand almost side-by-side. Both are radically different from each other but are still recognisably pubs – and serve their clientele well.

The **Bull** has many of the best qualities of a traditional boozier. It still retains a time-honoured two-room arrangement. The locals congregate in the public bar at the front of the pub, which features a pool table and large television.

Sporting events are shown, including football on Sky Sports. This has proved invaluable during the odd branch meeting as

the local **CAMRA** branch chairman and like-minded members pop in from the more meeting-friendly lounge bar to keep up with the latest scores.

The lounge bar is at the back of the pub and offers a quieter retreat from the busier public bar – and is decorated with interesting old maps of the area.

The lounge bar also provides access to the **Bull**'s best kept secret – an enormous beer garden stocked with enough distractions to keep even the most hyperactive children occupied for an afternoon (climbing frames, swings, a giant trampoline, etc.).

The children's facilities were much appreciated on a sunny Saturday at the start of June when a local branch family social was held at the **Bull**.

Family socials are designed to involve all ages in **CAMRA** social events and are arranged periodically at family friendly pubs. Children should hopefully benefit from seeing responsible attitudes to drinking.

Most importantly, we also have a great time demonstrating our responsibilities. The garden at the **Bull** was an excellent venue.

But the main reason to visit the **Bull** is, of course, the beer. The pub has been a mainstay of the **Good Beer Guide** for the last few years due to its well-kept real ale. Three ales are normally on offer – **Tetley's Bitter**, **Fuller's London Pride** and **Charles Wells' Bombardier** – the latter being on excellent form during the family social.

A few yards down the road from the **Bull**, a glance at the **Woolpack**'s large

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# ENJOY THE DIVERSITY!

car park shows that it is a rather different type of pub – drawing most of its clientele from far and wide.

The pub has been heavily refurbished over the past few years and continues to expand – a Ground Force-style decking area for outdoor eating and drinking has been constructed at front this summer.

The **Woolpack** has its own website (<http://www.woolpackstokemandeville.co.uk>). This reveals that the pub is part of a subtly branded chain – comprised of similar ‘gastro country pubs and eating houses’ – the interiors of which are described as ‘stylish...comfortable, light and open’.

These words may sound like a living hell to many **CAMRA** members and regular readers of *Swan Supping* – who know our revulsion of overpriced, pretentious gastropubs with poor service and even worse food.

However, the **Woolpack** is NOT one of these.

In these pages we don’t indulge in fancy descriptions of food (beer perhaps?). Suffice it to say that, on a recent visit, the food was very good. Moreover, it is not particularly expensive, provided the various ‘extras’ on the menu, like pricey mineral water, are avoided.

Most impressive was the service – quick, polite and attentive – something that is beyond the wit of many other pubs. Also welcome is a complete non-smoking policy.

The **Woolpack** is certainly a pub that pushes its food offering. However, it still caters for bona fide drinkers and has a reasonably spacious bar area for their use.

While nudging the edge of the foodie spectrum, it remains recognisably a pub. This is confirmed by the presence of that other essential ingredient of a good pub – real ale. *Fuller’s London Pride* and that great Yorkshire ale, *Timothy Taylor Landlord*, are currently on offer.

It’s perhaps a sign-of-the-times to see real ale on waiter service. However, we all know good beer is the best accompaniment to a pub meal. It was therefore gratifying to see many discerning customers keeping the waiting staff busy carrying a steady flow of real ale to the diners’ tables.

*Charlie Mackle*

An advertisement for Wells Bombardier beer. It features a large glass of dark beer with a thick head of foam. A small sign on a stick is stuck into the foam, reading "NATURAL MINERAL WATER" and "NO FISHING". The glass has a label that says "WELLS BOMBARDIER ENGLISH PREMIUM BITTER". A small blue and red gnome figurine is sitting on the surface next to the glass. The background is a light blue gradient.

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## CAMRA INVESTMENT CLUB AGM & LUNCH

I reported on last year's *CAMRA* Investment Club AGM and lunch in *Swan Supping* issue 49. There's no need therefore to go into detail about this year's event on 17 June, again held at the **Victoria Hotel**, Beeston, which was selflessly attended by myself and Alan Sheppard from *Aylesbury Vale & Wycombe branch* along with some ninety others; the following brief report should suffice.

The AGM proceedings were, as always, crisply conducted by Chairman Chris Bruton. His opening remarks were imbued with the sadness and frustration, shared by members, at the breaking news of *Greene King's* acquisition of the old Nottingham independent brewer *Hardys & Hansons*. Perversely that buy-out, coupled with others in the past year, has played no small part in taking the fund value to an all time high at over £8 million. Not bad for a Club whose first accounts in respect of the year ended 31 December 1989 showed investments at a market value of just £30,261, as the indefatigable Neil Kellett noted in his paper 'A Trip through the Archives' accompanying the AGM reports.

But with a fund of that size, and growing, owned by some 3000 members, and growing, the Club is reaching a position at last when it can exercise real clout in its sector. A holding of less than 0.5% of the share value of a long-established big brewer is one thing, but, when the investment becomes say 10% or more in a medium-sized, relatively new brewer, the Club's position is significantly enhanced. The message is clear: the more *CAMRA* members get involved the greater will be their collective strength.

One member made the point at the AGM that despite the loss of many established old names over recent years, one only had to look at the pump-clips in the **Victoria Hotel** bar to be reminded of today's thriving micro-brewery industry.

Well Alan and I did more than just 'look at the pump-clips' - after all

we had a duty of care to our branch membership. So in serious market analysis mode, as an accompaniment to the usual superb lunch, in an effort to enhance our unit holdings in more ways than one, we made an immediate investment in such liquid stocks as *Castle Rock Hemlock*, *Castle Rock Harvest Pale*, *Bateman Valiant*, *Ossett Silver Fox*, *Burton Bridge Burton Porter*, *Oakhams Bishop's Farewell*, *Milestone Loxley Ale*...to name but a few of those on offer...but as I said above, there's no need to go into detail.

*Giles du Boulay*

### *Moor Beer at Wooburn*

I parted company with Giles Du Boulay at Haddenham and Thame Parkway train station still reminiscing on the ever-well attended and well organised *CAMRA* Investment Club AGM and Annual luncheon. Having been granted an extra appendage on my day release (honest?), from my family duties, I diverted from High Wycombe train station to Watery Lane, Wooburn Moor.

Their sole public house the **Falcon** held another one of their annual summer beer festivals over the weekend of June 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Twenty real ales were on offer from around the country, with three hailing from local branch brewery *Rebellion*. Pick of the beers, for me anyway, *Golden Pippin* (3.9) from the stupendous *Copper Dragon* brewery in Skipton, North Yorkshire, *Glastonbury Lady of the Lake* (4.2), and the formidable *Aviator* (4.0) from Cumbria's *Dent* brewery, another fine beer from a fine brewery. I attended Saturday night and it was the busiest that I have seen it at any of their beer festivals. Well done all, same again next year please!

*Sarah Pepland*

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**£45,000**

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## More Local News



(Continued from page 2)

the immediate future. Emma Browne is new to the trade and is joined by her boyfriend Ben Greerson who comes from a catering background.

### FRIETH

The new tenants since mid May at the **Prince Albert** are Mike and Anne Robinson. They used to run the **Bottle and Glass** in Binfield Heath before they decided to retire. They then got bored and decided to give up their life of leisure and take on a pub again! We wish them every success in this old **Brakspear** pub which used to be very popular with branch members.

### GREAT HAMPDEN

Real cider was spotted on handpump at the **Hampden Arms**.

### GREAT KIMBLE

The **Bernard Arms** has been sold and bought by a South African couple – Marc and Janine. They have introduced a new bar menu of lighter and more inexpensive meals in addition to the restaurant menu. The pub is now open all day Thursday to Saturday (normal hours otherwise). Four refurbished bedrooms are available for letting. The landlord was a noted beer aficionado in South Africa and is keen to hear feedback and cater for local tastes. The beers on offer at the moment are **Deuchars IPA**, **London Pride** and **Adnams Broadside**.

### HAMBLEDEN

The **Stag & Huntsman** is holding a beer festival. However, due to the fact that the August Bank Holiday is always so busy, they are holding it over the weekend of September 2nd and 3rd.

### HIGH WYCOMBE

Recent visits to the **Belle Vue** have uncovered some interesting guest beers. **Wadworth Summersault** (4.0), **Wickwar Brand Oak Bitter** (4.0) and **MacLir** (4.4) from the Isle of Man brewery **Okells**, were enjoyed during the World Cup.

### MARLOW

Little Marlow Road public house the **Britannia** is to have a new manager from mid-July. Two local brews, **IPA** (3.7) and **Smuggler** (4.1) are available and sourced from the **Rebellion** brewery.

Good Beer Guide 2006 entrant the **Carpenters Arms** have a new **Greene King** guest ale to join their two regular

brewery ales. **AleFresco** (4.3) replaces brewery brew **Triumph Ale** (4.3) at the hand pumps and will stay on over the summer period.

The town's guest beer flagship pub, the **Duke of Cambridge**, maintains their medley of real ales, with a second hand pump being employed during the World Cup. **Butts Jester** (3.5) and **Traditional Bitter** (4.0), **Everards Sunchaser** (4.0), **Bateman's Valiant** (4.2) and **England Expects** (4.0), all welcome imbibes of late. **Caledonian Dr. Bob's Magic Potion** (3.5) (a dark mild) was one ale that disappeared very quickly, a style of beer that allegedly 'just does not sell in these parts'. Landlords please take note. Further Independent brewery beers last month included **Potton Shannon IPA** (3.6) and **Dark Mild** (3.4) and **Pride** (3.8) from the ever excellent **Archers brewery**.

Bryan & Pam Evans of the **Hare & Hounds** have sold to Mike Tory and John Trueman at a guide price of £95,000 after using the services of **Fleurets**. Bryan and Pam had owned the pub for approximately three years having moved from up North. The food led pub was run down when they took it and after some investment and TLC had recovered trade to in excess of £300,000pa (net) on a food led basis. Mike Tory hails from a catering & management background and together with John, intend substantially to invest in the **Hare & Hounds** to lift it to a new level.

Street-corner pub the **Marlow Donkey** has temporarily closed due to refurbishments. Further details next issue.

The **Plough** is now the **Plough Masala** Indian restaurant and will be opening soon. There are unconfirmed reports as to whether real ale will be on their agenda or not!

Local monthly special brew **Zonked** (4.2) from the town's **Rebellion Beer Co**, is to feature during August at the **Prince of Wales**. Whilst September sees **Rebellion Blotto** (4.4) at the bar among their three permanent stable mate real ales.

### MARSH

The **Prince of Wales** has a new fence.

### NAPHILL

Mark and Claire Christian took over the **Wheel** in June. They guarantee a

warm welcome and are offering more choice of real ales with at least two guest ales available and they hope to run a beer festival in October. There is also a new menu available with plans for parties and BBQ's: the first of many is on the 5th August.

### PRINCES RISBOROUGH

The **Bell** had a second successful annual beer festival with many real ales on offer (a full report can be found on page 8). It also now has a second real ale handpump featuring a guest beer.

The **Black Prince** has real ale again – **Courage Best**.

### SPEEN

The **De-Wanium** (formerly the **King William IV**) may be reopening in the autumn following a refurbishment. More news, hopefully, next issue.

### THAME

The **Falcon**, which was previously owned by **Greene King**, has been a **Hook Norton** pub since the end of May. Carl Hollowday is the temporary licensee and the pub is currently serving **Hooky Best Bitter** and **Old**

**Hooky**. We will keep you up to date with the licensee situation in future editions.

### WOOBURN COMMON

Semi-rural country pub the **Royal Standard** continues to thrill with five real ales on hand pump and five on gravity dispense, with a dark beer amongst the ten. **Rebellion Mild** (3.5), **Burton Bridge Porter** (4.5) and **Old Slug Porter** (4.5) from **RCH** to name but a few, have graced the bar in the recent month.

### WOOBURN GREEN

Oriental pub/restaurant the **Old Bell**, still impresses with their guest beer rotation. **Fuller's London Pride** (4.1) and **Caledonian Deuchars IPA** (3.8) accompany an ever rotating guest ale. Recent debutants have been **Tring Fanny Ebbs** (3.9), **Stonehenge Pigswill** (4.0) and a certain **Sarah Hughes Dark Ruby** (6.0), a rare beer indeed to see in a pub around this area. Well done the management!

### WOOBURN MOOR

The **Falcon** held a very popular beer festival in June. Lets hope that they are just as successful next year!



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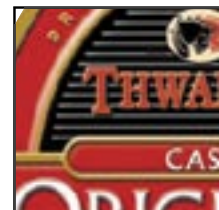
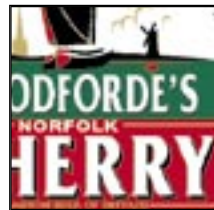
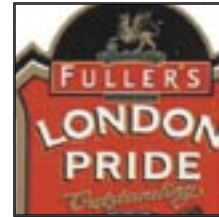
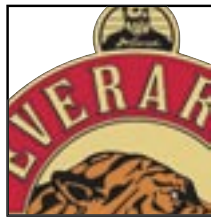
<b>Black Swan Dark Mild</b>	3.3%	500ml
<b>Wychert Ale</b>	3.9%	500ml
<b>Edgar's Golden Ale</b>	4.3%	500ml
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